



GriffinGram

SEA CONTROL SQUADRON THIRTY EIGHT

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A WORD FROM THE CO

Dear Griffin family and friends,

It is my privilege to share with you how proud I am of each and every man in this command. VS-38 played a key role in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM as Mission Tanker, Armed Surface Reconnaissance, and Time Sensitive Striker.

As a result, The Constellation Battle Group made a significant contribution what will go down in history as one of the most successful combat campaigns ever. The Red Griffin's achievements were nothing short of spectacular. Working and flying at a blinding pace, the squadron flew at unprecedented levels, ultimately assuring the quick and decisive victory we enjoyed. Each and everyone of you should be extremely proud of the men of VS-38, Carrier Air Wing TWO, and the rest of the Constellation Battle Group.

Never before in the history of the S-3B Viking has such a group of officers and personnel come together with single purpose and achieved such noble objectives. Were it not for the Red Griffins, hundreds of strike sorties could not have reached their targets during this lightning offensive. During the 21-day campaign, your Griffins were asked the impossible, flying more sorties than at any other time in Griffin history. Their teamwork was phenomenal. Administration, Safety, Maintenance, and Operations Departments worked around the clock, night after night, to answer the call. While aircrew flew demanding hours, the maintenance department always provided "Full up" jets for the day's first launch. Combating adverse conditions such as blinding sandstorms, thunderstorms, and in total darkness, the Griffins and Carrier Air Wing TWO proudly supported Army and Marine ground operations.

One of the largest Naval armada, certainly the most lethal, the Constellation Battle Group was not alone in theater. Four other aircraft carrier battle groups including the Lincoln Battle Group, Kitty Hawk Battle Group and later the Nimitz Battle Group joined us in the Gulf, and the Roosevelt and Truman Battle Groups operated from the Mediterranean Sea.

The pinnacle of the war effort occurred in the early days of the war when Red Griffin 701 made combat history. After many months of intense training, the Griffins shot the first Air-to-Surface missile in combat by an S-3B. Firing a laser guided Maverick missile, the crew flawlessly executed a challenging time sensitive strike against a significant Naval target over defended territory. Flying as a mixed section, an FA-18 Hornet from VFA-151 supported the shot by providing the laser designation on the target. VS-38 also provided a formidable battle group defense for our Naval Forces guaranteeing zero combat losses to coalition ships.

Your brave Red Griffins have proven themselves in heroic fashion. However, we could not have achieved so much without the tremendous support from home. We look forward to being reunited with all of you soon and we thank you for your support throughout this challenging deployment. We thank God for the blessings that have brought all of us safely through this conflict, and as we make our way home we pray for His continued blessings. Many brave men and women have defended their country with honor. Let us not forget those who have fallen in the service of our nation. God willing, world peace and stability will be the result or their sacrifice.

CDR S. M. Kelly

CROSSING THE LINE



CONGRATULATIONS NEW GRIFFIN SHELLBACKS

The GriffinGram is an official publication of Sea Control Squadron 38, but does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the United States Navy.

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CMC'S CORNER

This month I am enclosing a homecoming article that touches base on a number of issues that all of us may encounter as we reunite with our loved ones. Take the time to give it a good read and think about each of the points. Although written from the spouse's point of view, it gives great insight to what is ahead. Enjoy....

CMDCM (SW) Chris Thompson

Welcome Home, Honey. Now What?

By Taya L. Cline

You gave your Sailor or Marine a big send-off and had a million things planned to keep you busy during the deployment. You were going to rearrange the storage space in the garage, rework the landscaping, start an exercise program, paint the bathroom and kitchen, and read all those books you've had piling up forever. Now you find yourself preparing for homecoming wondering where all the time went. It happens to everyone.

Homecoming often presents a challenge to the spouse because you are welcoming back the love of your life that you haven't seen for many months, yet you know that you have grown during the separation and you are hoping you haven't changed too much.

But you have. And more than likely your partner has too. Homecoming is a perfect time for you to get reacquainted with each other and to learn all over again the reasons why you love each other.

Handling the Return with Children

One of the things that cause the most stress during a homecoming is when your spouse begins regaining his or her status as an integral part of the family unit. The children naturally have learned to come to you with all of their problems, wants, and needs during the extended separation caused by deployment because you are the one at home. On return, your spouse may not feel like he or she is needed in the household because you have done a wonderful job handling everything on your own. But all you really want is for him or her to jump in and help take over the responsibilities.

To reduce some of the stress of the reunion, sit down with your children beforehand and talk to them. Explain that the deployed parent has been gone for a long time and everyone has missed him or her very much. However, immediately on return, he or she shouldn't be bombarded with all the negative things that happened during the deployment, like how many times junior was grounded. Instead, instruct the children that it is all right to ask him or her to help do some things to help, like fix the reflector that fell off the

bicycle tire, or provide artistic help on that school project which is due next week.

Spousal Reunions

This guidance also applies to spouses. Don't flood your newly arrived spouse with the car repair bills or the problems you've had with the kids' teachers while they were deployed.

Regular daily routines can be hard to keep when your loved one comes home. The children don't want to go to school because they would rather stay home and play with their rediscovered parent. You want the children to go to school so you can stay home and play with your rediscovered spouse. It can be frustrating when you want to spend quiet time with your spouse but the children are next to you yelling and screaming.

A good balance would be to give the children a day or two at home before planning that romantic evening alone. Then, ask a neighbor (someone whose spouse didn't just come home from deployment also) to take the children for a night and offer to do the same for them sometime in the near future.

Redefining the Environment

Environmental change is something you may hear about quite a bit. The change of living arrangements that is happening to your spouse is drastic. For months he or she has lived in close quarters with hundreds of his or her fellow Sailors or Marines either on board ship or in the barracks, listening to constant noise 24 hours a day, getting up before dawn and working hard all day in stressful situations, being in charge, and having to answer to others. Suddenly he or she comes home to a quiet home filled with love. This kind of radical environment change can be stressful as well. Here are some tips to welcome home your beloved in a special way.

- Relax. Enjoy the natural high of your spouse's homecoming. Enjoy having him or her around the house, seeing him or her fall asleep in his or her favorite chair and seeing him or her when you wake up in the morning. Even take a moment to enjoy that sea bag full of dirty laundry that also came home. You might want to enjoy it

outside on the porch so it doesn't leave its odor around the house.

- Party. Before you start planning that huge block party for your honey, think about what would be the best choice. It may be just to come home and go to sleep. Or spend an evening eating junk food with the kids and catching up on all the television shows. We all want to share our joy and excitement, but a party on the first day home may not be the best thing.
- Encourage out of town relatives to delay their visit for three to five days. This will allow some time for you and the kids to get back into a routine with your spouse and allow him or her to figure out what the new duty schedule will look like. Then it would be the best time to plan a get-together. Ask whether he or she would like to have a family barbeque or a picnic. Ask who should be invited.
- Integration into some sort of normal lifestyle and schedule will take time to develop. If this is your first deployment or separation it will be even more difficult because you will not know what to expect. Talk to your neighbor, or talk to other spouses in the unit and ask them what it was like during their first deployment. What are some things you can expect while your spouse is away? What are some things you can expect when your spouse comes home?
- The most important thing to remember is that you and your spouse will go through a series of changes during deployment. The stress will rise and fall throughout the deployment and will continue during the homecoming. Be supportive and be understanding. Remember, you fell in love with your spouse and you still love him or her. Even with that sea bag full of dirty laundry.



OMBUDSMAN'S NOTES

Mrs. Michelle Klees the Command Ombudsman encourages all spouses to call her if they have any questions or concerns regarding homecoming. She can be reached at 619-429-8854 or mama_griffin@yahoo.com.